



THE PILGRIMAGE OF LOUGH DERG.

“I will give thee understanding, and instruct thee in the way
by which you are to go.”—Ps. xxxi. v. 8.

Approved and written by B. D.

“Blessed are they whose sins are forgiven.”



Morning Prayer during the Stations.

O most indulgent Father of Mercies and God of all consolation: who didst not only give us thy beloved Son to die upon the Cross for our Redemption, but would have this obligation to be yearly renewed in these Stations, to revive in us daily the memory of thy love: grant me, I beseech thee, so attentively and reverently to be present at this adorable mystery, that our hearts being set on fire with the contemplation of so great a love, we may come at length to be united with thee in perfect charity, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.—Amen.

TO THE READER.

Christian Reader... The reason which induced me to write this little treatise was the importunity of some Pilgrims of Lough Derg, who earnestly desired me to inform them of the Institution and Nature of the Stations of that holy place.

I thought it somewhat difficult at first, not having books by me that treated of the subject; but, considering the spiritual benefit that would hence accrue to the Christians that resort thither, I undertook to explain the nature of that Pilgrimage, which chiefly consists in PRNANCE, and by assistance of God's grace, brought it to a conclusion. And I shewed it to the most solid and knowing Divines that were in the Island at that time, who highly esteemed it, and withal, persuaded me to preach to the people on the same subject, which I did to the glory of God. The benefit and fruit which the people by the Sermon received their instructions, the satisfaction of our adversities, and the honour of St. Patrick, moved me to publish it. And it is divided into the six following Chapters, with a brief exhorting Conclusion. Each Chapter will be directed to the Reader, by way of instruction, and information of the things performed in this Pilgrimage. And if it be somewhat obscure, I hope you will pardon me, being sensible, that brevity commonly produces obscurity.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Spiritual Benefits of this Pilgrimage.

Christian Reader—Observe that it is very proper and profitable, for a man conversant in this turbulent world, who having the care of a house and family, is necessarily involved in the tri-

bulations and affairs of this wicked world, and surrounded with infinite occasions and snares of offending God, to withdraw himself from these unavoidable snares of sin, either perpetually, and during his life, or at least for some time, and to retire to some solitary place, to look for the salvation of his soul (which is the chief business we are to mind), following herein the example of the Royal Prophet, saying, "Behold, I have retired, and remained in the wilderness." Psalm 1. 5, 7. But why? To expect him who saved them from the pusillanimity of spirit and tempest, because he saw iniquity and contradiction in the city, amongst which it is difficult for a weak and frail man to avoid sin. Jerem. speaks to the same purpose: Oh, who is he shall lead me to the wilderness (said he), that I may leave my people, and depart from them, for they are adulterers and an assembly of treacherous men. Jer. 9, 2 v. But it is God alone that allures his soul with his special grace to this retreat, according to that of Osee, 2, 14. "I will lead her into the wilderness, and will speak comfortably to her heart."

Let us, therefore, imitate our Saviour Jesus Christ, who was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness that he might fast and pray, Mat. 4, and likewise his preacher St. John the Baptist, who preached penance in the wilderness, Luke 3, penance (I say) and the fruits thereof, that by how much a man glorified himself, and was in delights, by so much he ought to give himself punishment and grief, Rev. 18.—Therefore, as we often offend God by correspondence, society, communication, and affairs of this world, and worldly men, even so it is meet and good we should often at home lead a retired life, and sometimes betake ourselves to that secret desert of our holy Apostle St. Patrick: Yet it seems expedient, (if not necessary), that profligate and profane sinners, who had their bodies swallowed in all kinds of voluptuousness and sensuality in drinking, eating, and other carnal pleasures, should mortify and punish the same with cold, fasting, prayers, and other austerities, applying spiritual medicines, and soul-healing salves of penance to their spiritual wounds and soul-killing infirmities.

CHAP. II.

Of the Entrance into this Holy Island.

Let the reader mark, that we enter this place bareheaded and barefooted: For, if the place where the Angel spoke to Moses concerning the Israelites' delivery from the bondage of Pharaoh, was so holy, that he was commanded to tread upon it barefooted, Exod. 3, why should not this place be holy? Where God commissioned and deputed our apostolic Moses, St. Patrick, to

enlarge us out of the slavery and captivity of our spiritual Pharaoh, the devil. And if Joshua was commanded to loose his shoes from off his feet, when he spoke to the Prince of the Host of the Lord, because the place where he stood was holy, Joshua 5, why should not this place be holy, where we speak to God and St. Patrick, prince and chief of the saints of our nation, and go thither barefooted? Finally, if the Prophet Isaiah was commanded to walk naked for the sins of others, Isaiah 20—why should we not enter this place of penance barefooted and bareheaded, to expiate our enormous crimes? Moreover: we pass into this island by water, that of the royal Prophet, Psalm 65, may be applied to us—We have passed through fire and water, and thou leadest us into a place of refreshment—that by the fire of the devotion, and water of tribulation, GOD may hence lead us all to the spiritual refreshment of our souls and conscience.

CHAP. III.

Of the First Stations about the Chapel.

Having humbly received the Superior's blessing, we kneel before the Altar of St. Patrick, signing ourselves with the sign of the Cross, saying, In whose name we begin our pilgrimage, as we ought to begin and perform all our works; and there we say one pater, one ave, and one creed. The one pater is to signify the unity of the divine nature (who according to Isaiah and St. Paul) working all our works in us. Isaiah xxv. 12, 1 Cor. xiii. 11. especially our penance which we now begin. We say an ave, that as we received our Saviour and Redeemer by the blessed Virgin Mary, so we would by her intercession, obtain grace and remission of our sins from God, and perseverance on doing penance and eternal bliss. We say a creed, that by it we would make a profession of our faith before God, who purifieth our hearts by faith—Acts, 5. 9. For it is impossible to please God without faith, Heb. 11.—The same reasons may serve for all paters, aves, and creeds said. Here, after rising from the altar, we kiss its stone, that we may be cleansed from our sins, like Isaiah, who was purged and cleansed from his iniquities, when his lips were touched with a stone taken from the altar. Isa. 6. Afterwards we kneel at the corner of the chapel, where we repeat 3 paters, 3 aves, and 1 creed. We rise then, and turn our back to the cross with uplifted hands. We repeat three times, We renounce the world, the devil, and the flesh, to obtain from the Holy Trinity, three things chiefly necessary for penance, to wit, the fear of the Lord, whereby sin is banished away, Ecc.

13. Humility, by which our prayers penetrate the clouds; neither do we part until the Most High looks mercifully upon us, Eccl. 35. And Patience, by which we possess our souls, Luke 21. We begin at the corner of the chapel, going round it and the altar seven times, in which we repeat seven Decades, according to that of the royal Prophet, Ps. 26. I have surrounded and sacrificed in this tabernacle; either in satisfaction of our seven capital sins which we commit in the seven days of the week, or because "a just man falleth seven times a day, and riseth again." Prov. 34.—In our first going round we kiss the cross which is placed in the wall of the chapel, to signify, that we ought to embrace and lift up our cross and follow Christ, who spilled his precious blood seven times for us, by which we are washed from our sins. First, in his circumcision—Secondly, in the Garden of Gethsamene.—Thirdly, by the scourges, when he was bound to the pillar.—Fourthly, when he was crowned with thorns.—Fifthly, when he was stripped naked upon Mount Calvary—Sixthly, when he was nailed to the cross. Sevenily, after his death, when his side was pierced with a lance.—Likewise, after we kiss the same cross, before we depart from it, we touch it with our shoulders, by which we signify, that we ought to persevere in carrying our cross to the end.

CHAP. IV.

Of the Stations about the Seven Penitential Beds.

The seven beds, or little cells, are dedicated to seven Saints. The first to St. Brenon, the second to St. Cathrine, the third to St. Bridget, the fourth to St. Columb, the fifth to St. Patrick, the 6th to St. Avil, the seventh to St. Boisses.

You must observe, that we go round each bed thrice in the outside, saying in the mean time 3 paters, 3 aves, and 1 creed; we repeat the first pater and ave in satisfaction of the sins of our thoughts; the second pater and ave in satisfaction of the sins of our words; the third pater and ave in satisfaction of the sins of our deeds, for which we humble ourselves kneeling at the door, and saying 3 paters, 3 aves, and 1 creed. We advance inside of the first bed, walking round three times, repeating 3 paters, 3 aves, and 1 creed, and the same kneeling, and the same also round the other 6 small beds, to obtain from God true contrition of heart, sincere confession of mouth, and entire satisfaction of works by which we may arise from sin.

After this we enter the penal bed, that we may be thoroughly purged from our iniquities, and do go round about it 9 times, saying 9 paters, 9 aves, and 3 creeds, on the outside—the first

is said to satisfy for the sins of infirmity against the Father—the second pater and ave for the sins of ignorance against the Son—the third pater and ave for the sins of malice against the Holy Ghost—for which sins we humble ourselves, kneeling at the first door of the penal bed, saying 6 paters, 6 aves, and 2 creeds. We advance inside, walking round, repeating 6 paters, 6 aves, and 2 creeds, and kneeling, say the same. We advance to the last door of the penal bed, kneeling, saying 3 paters, 3 aves, and 1 creed; we advance in walking round, saying 3 paters, 2 aves, and 1 creed, and the same kneeling, that by the power of the Father, wisdom of the Son, and goodness of the Holy Ghost, we may obtain plenary remission of the same sins; of the aforesaid prayers, we say to receive the twelve fruits of the Holy Ghost, viz. charity, joy, patience, longanimity, goodness, benignity, modesty, fidelity, continence, and charity.—Gal. 5.

*Of the Stations in the Water, and the Rosary, or Psalter
of the Blessed Virgin Mary.*

Haying finished the Stations of the Penal Beds, we begin the Stations of the water, by a craggy, sharp, and uneasy path, to being tired in the way of iniquity and perdition, we have walked through hard way*, but have not known the ways of the Lord, Saj. 5, why should we walk in such ways, to do penance, and know the way of the Lord, that we might eschew the plain and easy path of sinners, whose end is hell, darkness, and punishment, Eecl. 21. To avoid therefore, the same doom with the wicked*, we go round the stones, standing in the water three times, to satisfy for the sins of our will, memory, and understanding: saying, in the mean time, 5 paters, 5 aves, and 1 creed, to redeem the punishment due to the sins of our five outward senses; then humbly kneeling on the sharp stones and fixing our hopes and confidence in Jesus Christ the corner stone, we say 5 other paters, 5 aves, and 1 creed, that we may extract remedies from his 5 sacred wounds, against the transgressions of our carnal senses. From whence we advance to a round stone, a distance out in the Lough, on which we stand and say 1 pater, 1 ave, and 1 creed, to satisfy that we beg one thing of God, to-wit, life everlasting. Psalm 26. And likewise, that we have but one Mediator of Redemption, CHRIST JESUS, 1 Tim. 2—who is the only corner stone, and on whom we should steadfastly fix ourselves, who has seven eyes, which are the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and the fear of the Lord: about which, it is impossible for us to cleave to Christ, to stand unshaken in faith.

Then we lift up our hands to heaven, to signify that all good things come down to us from the Father of Lights, by the merits and mediation of our Lord Jesus Christ, whom we most earnestly entreat, to enable us with his grace to walk upright in his laws and commandments for the future. Leaving the water, we proceed forward to the altar of St. Patrick, where we say 1 pater, 1 ave, and a creed, that the Lord, who moved us by his divine grace, to begin our penance, would give us strength to bring the same to a successful and prosperous end. Afterwards we enter the chapel and repeat the Psalm, or Rosary of the Blessed Virgin;

* No person is now permitted to go into the water—the prayers to be doubled at the water's edge—i. e. ten paters, ten aves, and two creeds; standing, and the same kneeling.

First, thanking God, who is magnified, exceedingly pleased with penance, by whose power and divine assistance, we triumphed victoriously, having thrown the horse and the rider, the devil and sin into the sea.—Exod. 15.

2d. Because of the mysteries contemplated in this Psalter, our redemption began; our Saviour appeared in the flesh, remission of sin obtained, and everlasting life hoped for. These Stations are performed thrice a day: First, that we may obtain from God strong faith, sure hope, and true charity. Secondly, Because all sins in the world proceed from the concupiscence of the flesh, concupiscence of the eyes, and pride of life. St John, 2. Thirdly, That God would vouchsafe to give ear to our voice with David, morning, noon, and evening, Ps. civ. and with Daniel 6. we would worship the Lord thrice a day, and confess our sins before him—Fourthly, That the Lord would defend us from pestilence, war, and famine, the ordinary scourges by which he punishes sinners.

Of the Fast, and Grave, or Vault.

We fast nine days, because we are to be assumed to the nine order of angels, to whom by fasting we are resembled. Moreover, this fast is performed on bread and water, which are the beginning of man's life, Eccl. 29—that they might be to us the beginning of a spiritual life, having by the grace of God, triumphed over sin; we enter into a grave, or vault, where we continue for four and twenty hours to fulfil the Lord's precept, Isaiah 2, “Enter into the rock, and hide yourselves in the earth, for fear of the Lord, and the glory of his majesty, for our sins have laid us in the lowest pit of darkness, and in the shadow of death. Ps. 87. Nevertheless, we will not be discouraged, because the Lord said, by Is. 26—“My slain shall rise again, to wake and give praise ye who dwell in the dust:” “Go my people, enter into your chambers, shut thy doors upon thee; hide thyself for a little moment until the indignation will pass over.” To-wit, by penance and severe conversion of the heart, without which, all these penal works would avail nothing to salvation. For the soul which is heartily sorry for the greatness of her sins, and goeth crooked and weak, and the eyes which failed with watching the tears, and the soul which hungers, render glory and justice to the Lord, Bal. 2.

As soon as we leave the grave or vaults (now the chapel) we wash our hands and faces, to signify, that we are washed and cleansed from the filth of sin, and have broken the dragon's head in the waters,—Psalm 73, 13. And even as the children of Israel left their enemies drowned in the Red Sea, so should we have our spiritual enemies drowned in this red Lough, by which we are buried with Christ unto death, that with him we might rise again into eternal glory, which I earnestly beseech our most merciful God, to grant both you and me.

After performing your pilgrimage and penance, you are to observe well those things following; for, though, as I suppose,

you have left Pharaoh and his army, viz, sin, and inclinations drowned in the Red Lough, or St. Patrick's Purgatory, yet ye go not straight to heaven as souls out of Purgatory, but you must walk through the wilderness of this deceitful world, to enter into the land of promise ; returning now in the flesh to the world, where the devil, in his rage and fury, expects to destroy your penance and pilgrimage with his accustomed snares, as he did with the children of Israel, after they had passed through the Red Sea, knowing well whatever day the just man turneth from his justice and works iniquity, i. e. mortally sinneth, all his justice is forgotten, Ezek. 18. A sad loss indeed ! To be shunned by watching and prayers.

Therefore, dear brother, coming to the service of God, stand in justice and fear, and prepare your soul against temptation, in humility, in the fear of the Lord, and true patience confiding in the mercy of God and your strength, pilgrimage, or penances, executing your resolutions here made; not only to be reconciled truly with your God, but also your neighbours, both by heart and mouth, asking pardon of them, if you have not asked it before you came hither and restoring their honour, reputation, and fame, and their goods, whether unlawfully received by you as robbery, or usury, or lawfully, as debts, and that as soon as possible. Likewise avoiding the occasions of your former sins, as gaming, dancing, drinking, bad company, compliances, or persons with whom heretofore you have had sinful societies, offices, or trades, which you scarce or never exercised without offending God, as buying and selling goods, especially liquors. Moreover, you must avoid pride, vain glory, or boasting of our good works, especially for performing this pilgrimage as many do, for by such boastings you receive your reward, and lose the eternal fruit of your penance as the hen loses her egg by her cackling.

Therefore, it is better to hide and cover them, as the husbandman his seeds, fearing the birds of the air should carry them away. And if you had not these resolutions, your penance was not true, and your pilgrimage was in vain ; if you dont put them in execution, you will lose entirely your labour, toil, and mortification ; for it were better for one not to know the way of truth, than after knowing it to depart from it, St. Pet. 2d Ep. 2, And he who sinneth in one, loses many goods, i. e. he who sins mortally loses all his good works.

Therefore, my brother, after leaving this Lough, give thanks to God, singing gloriously a new song of praise ; [suffer temptations, thirst, and hunger, obey God. Fear not the sons of Anac, though great and strong, viz. your great and irregular passions, for by the grace of God, you will overcome

them, with Og and Sihon, i. e. the devil and the world, and by the Amalakites, viz. your corporal senses, or lustful desires.

And Jesus, being our captain, by Jordan, or good life, you will enter the land of promise, which is eternal life (though highly walled with lofty virtues) which God grant me and you Pilgrims, by the intercession of the blessed Virgin Mary, all the Saints, and especially of St. Patrick, our holy patron. Amen.

Beati Quorum Remissi.

David declares them happy whose sins are forgiven.

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered — Blessed is the man to whom our Lord not imputed sin, neither is there deceit in his spirit — Because I hold my peace, my bones are waxed old whilst I cried all day — Because day and night thy hand is made heavy upon me. I am converted in my anguish whilst the thorn is stuck in me. I have made my sin known to thee and my injustice I have not hid. I said against myself, I will confess my injustice to the Lord ; and thou hast forgiven the impiety of my sin. For this shall every holy one pray to thee in a seasonable time. Certainly in the deluge of many waters, they shall not approach to him. Thou art my refuge from my tribulation which encompassed me ; my joy, deliver me from those that assault me on every side. I will give thee understanding, and instruct thee in the way that thou shalt go. I will fasten my eye upon thee. Do not become as the horse and the mule which have no understanding. In bit and bridle, bind fast their jaws who approach not unto thee. Many are the scourges of a sinner, but mercy shall encompass him that hopes in our Lord. Be joyful in our Lord ; and rejoice ye just, and glory all ye right of heart —

Glory to the Father, &c.

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